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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

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Dear Colleague:

Please join us in celebrating February as **"I Love to Read Month,"** February 14 as **"I Love to Read Day"** and Dr. Seuss's 100th birthday, March 2, 2004.

MOTIVATION, the heart of reading, fosters lifelong readers. One of the measures of a successful reading program is the enthusiasm and the frequency with which students voluntarily choose to read. Research tells us that motivation plays a critical role in helping students develop into enthusiastic, active, engaged readers who read both for information and pleasure. Therefore, in Montana, the month of February is dedicated toward fostering a love of reading. A calendar of daily activities to foster the love of reading and a page of suggested ideas to help your school celebrate a month of reading are included with this packet. Please make a copy for staff and/or student distribution.

I encourage you and your staff to plan activities that promote reading for enjoyment, as well as reading for information. You might plan a day or week in which music, art, physical education and other content areas are integrated with reading, writing and language activities. Reading aloud from a selection of literature is an excellent way to introduce a theme, a concept, or new content materials to students. Read aloud to students every day, no matter how old they are.

The greatest gift we can instill in our students is the belief that reading is worthwhile. Ideally, that belief stems from a personal need for experiences with books and also from the knowledge that books are a valuable source of information. The well-rounded reader finds both purposes important. Surrounding students with a rich variety of literature plus experiences that make a story come alive and draw the student into a book can provide the basis for genuine love of reading.

Help students foster the belief that reading is worthwhile by joining with us in celebrating February as "Reading Month," February 14 as "I Love to Read Day," and Dr. Seuss's birthday. Ideas for celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday can be found at www.reading.org and www.nea.org/readacross.

Please share with us some of the ways in which you celebrate reading. Your comments on the "I Love to Read" activities will be appreciated.

Happy reading,

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